

THE
Religious Apostor:
OR, THE
L I F E
OF
Alexander,

Sham-Propbet, Doctor and Fortune-Teller.

OUT OF LUCIAN.

Dedicated to Doctor S-h-a-n, and the rest of the
new Religious Fraternity of *Free-Thinkers*, near
Leather-Sellers-Hall.

By William Smith, Esq.

AMSTERDAM.

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Oct 10, 1905

To the Worthy Doctor S.-lm.-n, and the
Company of the Saints of the new Im-
pression, alias, *The Free-Thinkers.*

I Have been long doubtful to whom the following History ought to be Address'd, but cannot find any one to whose Patronage it might so properly be recommended as Yours, Worthy Sir. And, indeed, the Analogy that is betwixt the Heroe of this Piece, and your self, seems to challenge your Protection. For, were I a *Pythagorean*, I should swear that our *Alexander* animated and inform'd your numerical lump of Clay, as sure as ever *Pythagoras* himself was *Homer*, or *Euphorbus*; and that your Face was much more truly *Brass*, than ever his Thigh was *Gold*. But let that pass, those Opinions are worn out long since, and nothing will satisfy this incredulous Age but demonstration; however, I shall unburthen my Conscience to you and all the World, and let 'em see what reasons I have for my Opinion. This *Alexander*, when a Boy, was Apprentice to a Mountebank, under whom he serv'd as *Whackum* to his *Sidrophel*, and us'd to inveigle and divert the amazed silly Rour, with tumbling through a Hoop and Vaulting, and amuse 'em with Tricks of *Lagerdemain*, and *Sleight of hand*, conveying Money nimbly and dexterously out of the Spectators Purles, Pockets, or Handkerchiefs, which his Master was to Conjure for, and restore for a Reward: He serv'd him likewise in several other Capacities; as, *Jugler*, *Sub-Conjurer*, *Astrologer*, *Ganymede*, and *Orator*, made Speeches, and wrote *Panegyricks* in praise of his Master's *Panacea's*, *Panchymagogs*, *Family Pills* and *Powders*, *Cephalicks*, *Antipodugricks*, *Alexipharmacks*, *Antiscorbuticks*, *Hystericks*, and what not; He wrote *Almanacks*, to direct the taking of his Medicines, and made the Stars vouch for their Vertues, and was as well a written as breathing Dispensatory of his own Receipts: He Calculated *Nativities*, *Told Fortunes*, had admirable Secrets to *Soddererack'd Maidenheads*, and incomparable *Philtre's* for the Consolation of *Dispairing Damselfs*. Besides all this, which his Master shar'd with him, he had one Trade to himself, whose Revenue was his sole

A 2

Propriety,

The Epistle Dedicatory.

Propriety, which was letting out his *Postern* (for he was a good smug young Rogue.) All this he did under his Master for an honest livelihood; but his Master dying, and the growth of his Beard, and decay of his Face, beginning to put the Counterpart out of Repute, he sets up and succeeds him in his business, and a *Quack* he was for some time. But the Novelty of the Cheat being over, Trade began to grow dull, and the Scene must be shifted, so our Doctor packs up all, and away he marches, through several Countries he strowled; but after all, the Profits arising from this course of Life were not sufficient to satisfy his Ambition; so that some new Project must be started: In order to which, he associates to himself a Fellow, whom he had in his Travels scrap'd acquaintance with; he was a kind of Medley, part *Author*, part *Bookseller*, one that published and sold his own Works, whom he observ'd to have an excellent knack of Canting and Counterfeiting Religion, and to have cunning enough to Cheat his Neighbours. To this Man he imparts his design of setting up for a *Prophet*, and invites him into the Partnership of his Stratagem; and together these crafty Complotters set forward for *Paplagonia* our Hero's Native Country, which they chose for the Scene of their Actions, because the Inhabitants were a sort of stupid Block-headed People, of large Faith, and very little Sense, easie and credulous, Lovers of Novelty, and addicted to Superstition. Here they put in execution their Plot, gave out Oracles for 12 d. a piece, and soon grew into mighty Reputation among these foolish Gulls. What methods they took to bring their design to perfection, I need not inform you, who are already sufficiently vers'd in all the measures requisite for such Undertakings.

It is easie to apprehend for what end I give you this Summary of the History of *Alexander*, whom I take to have been a Type of You: For your Parts have been no less exercis'd than his, Your Education and Profession the same: If he made himself known to Foreign Countries, surely you have not sat idle at home; the *Church Yards* and *Burying-Places* are every where ample Witnesses of your Travels. If Statues were rais'd to his Memory, Millions of *Gravestones*, and *Monuments of Marble and Brass* will perpetuate your Name. Was he free of his avers *Venery*? You have been no niggard of your Talent on the other side, infinite numbers have tasted of your Benevolence, as well Sisters as others: You have Cultivated the neglected Soil, and by You the Barren has become Fruitful: You have Sowed where you have not Reaped,
and

The Epistle Dedicatory.

and strew'd where you have not Gathered. All Climates and Conditions have reap'd the fruit of your Labour. You have been, as it were, the common Father, and have rais'd up Seed not only to the Faithful, but even to the Gentiles also, so extensive has your Charity been. Was he beneficial to the World by his skill in Medicines? You have surpass'd him in that too, as far as the Substance does its Shadow: You teach when to cut Corns, and Let Blood: By you old Nurses are instructed to make *Carduus-Possers*, and *Chalybeat-Pancakes*: Bawds to cause Abortions, and to propagate the *Pox*: Scrumpets to counterfeit *Maidenheads*, and provoke *Venery*. In a word, your *Dispensatories* are inestimable Jewels in the publick Treasury; there may be learn'd to Cure *Scald Heads*, the *Itch*, *Corns*, *Chilblains*, and *Kib'd Heels*, with many Secrets more of equal value. Nor are you inferior to him in point of Prediction: For your *Almanacks*, and *Treatise of Chiromancy*, have made all the World Prophets: You can make the Stars depose whatever you please; and the very Lines of every Man's hand confirm what you say of him: You can tell at first sight, *That he that is born to be Hang'd shall never be Drown'd*; and, *That the Pope of Rome shall not be Lord Mayor next Year*. But oh! the unhappy State of Merit! it is very rarely regarded, and truth is seldom credited; this *Cassandra* experienc'd many Ages ago; and your representative *Alexander*, for some time labour'd under. But he found means to surmount all the difficulties he met with; and the very same expedient relieves you. Religion was his *Asylum*, and it is your Refuge; it was his Stalking-Horse, and is your Decoy. Well, Sir, speed you in your Design, 'tis a Pious Project, and may your Success be as much greater than his, as your Enterprize is more difficult and hazardous: His Scene was a Country of Sots, and his Auditor's a parcel of Fools, ready gather'd and prepar'd to his hand: Yours is an intelligent and populous City, and your Cullies must be pick'd and broken to your use, by your own Industry and Cunning. 'Tis true indeed your Instruments and Methods are the same, but there is a vast disparity in the matter to be wrought upon. He answer'd all Questions, so do you: He propos'd Remedies for all sorts of Grievances, so do you: He advis'd Physick, so do you: He us'd the assistance of a crafty Fellow, so do you. Only he met with no opposition, all believ'd him, so they do not you. However, proceed, let your Courage carry you through all Obstacles, and your Conscience be your Comfort: You know the old saying, *Non sit sine periculo*, &c. *Faint Heart*
never

The Epistle Dedictory.

never won *Fair Lady*. It is no easie matter to found a new Church, *Paul's*, you see can't be built in a day. But great will be the Honour when the Fear is done, adding one point to our Faith, is adding to the compass by which we steer to Heaven, our Directions are the more exact. Go on, regulate the whole Compass, and be your self the needle to point out the way. None but evil-minded Men can think our Spiritual Navigation sufficiently improv'd: I think he that finds out a shorter cut to Heaven, is a greater Benefactor to Mankind, and deserves more Honour than if he found the *North-East* Passage to the *Indies*. Who would wait a tedious Passage by a Waggon, who might go by the *Penny-Post*. Correct the Geography of Religion, and shew us a better Map of the Roads to the next World. Outdo *Bunyan*, and all the Spiritual *Chorographers* that have gone before you. Oh how happy you whose Souls have been anointed and tarr'd all over with his Doctrine, and liquor'd like Carriers Boots, to take off the Scabs of Prejudice; Whose *Scirrhom* Consciences have been soften'd by an *Emollient Cataplasme* of Argument? Who have taken an Emetick Dose of Repentance, and the *Cathartick Pills* of Contrition? Who have patiently endur'd a *Diaphoretick Dialogue*, and whose Concupiscence has been Flux'd and Salivated by the Precipitate of Spiritual Admonition, whose Appetites have been rais'd by a *Stomachick Whet* of Pious Curiosity, and satisfied with a Meal of Ghostly Comfort? Whose Spirits have been rais'd by the dear Cordial of Zeal, and whose strength supported by the precious Aliment of Faith, and whose Carnal Itches have been kill'd by the Unguent of Mortification, and whose inward Aches have been taken off by the Opiate of Election. To recount here the infinite advantages you, who are his Disciples, have by this Physician Spiritual and Temporal, were too tedious at this time, since what is past must make all the World as well envious as sensible of your Happiness. I shall conclude with a small Request to your great Master. In a word then, Pious Sir, May you never cease to hold forth the Sucking Bottle of the Gospel to the Babes of Grace, and the Crutches of Faith to the Crippled Saint. Satisfie the craving Sister, and assist the impotent Brother; so may your Predictions of the Weather always hold good, and your Almanack be fill'd with Saints of your own Canonizing, which is the Prayer of, Pious Sir,

Your Devout Admirer,

Sebastian Smith.

THE

T H E

P R E F A C E.

THE Reader is desired to take notice that the Translator has not tied himself to a Literal Version, but contented himself barely to give him the full Substance of the History, which he hopes he has not wrang'd, either by adding or subtracting any thing material: He has taken a larger Liberty with the Oracles, some of which he hath omitted, and given a new turn to the rest; as thinking them to contain nothing that might either Inform or Divert the English Reader: In the whole he hath chiefly follow'd the Example of Monsieur Abancourt, whose Version is to be found in Dr. Spon's *Récherches curieuses del Antiquité*. But besides, the Worthy Doctor, who had the Honour of our Epistle Dedicatory, there are Two more of the Gang, whose Characters follow. One of these Spiritual Navigators, a weak help to the new-founded Triumvirate, assisted his Two Brethren to facilitate their Voyage, by finding out the shortest Passage to their Wits end, and that is no far Journey you'll say. He is a great Friend to the Crooked Bodice-Seller in Cheapside, and Counsellor in Ordinary to his long-nosed Madam. This wonderful Caco-Coxcomb, call'd so not from the Greek, but from the good luck of besmitting himself, in a Conflict with a surly Low-Country Captain, who happen'd to have more Brawn than the other had Brain to prevent (like Pen)

The PREFACE.

Pen) any farther Quarrels, thought good to turn Religi-
onist. This Learned Juris-concealer was, to ever blessed
Remembrance, born a Goose and bred a Gown-man, so no
swap in the changing of his Trade, and a Divine Quaker has
well observed in his Poem, called the Blockhead's Blockade.

In Bitching still the Sot affected change,
Constant to nothing but a Dunce's Brains;
Tho' his ill face and worser ills applied,
Makes me believe a roguish Poet lied.

And so in Dad I have done with Father D--dly.

The other is an Honest Man, of some Learning, and a
great deal of mistaken Zeal, drawn in to be their Apollo,
but he soon found that the other Legs of the Cricket were
not in proportion to his Strength, and so that Oracle ceased,
spoiling a good old Proverb in the fall; not between two
Stools, but a Seat of one Leg, the Arse of two Thirds of the
Learned Triumvirate went to the Ground.

ALEX.

ALEXANDER:

OR,

The False Prophet.

Out of Lucian.

YOU imposed no small task upon me, my dear *Celsus*, when you enjoined me to write the Life of *Alexander* the pretended Son of *Poderus*, which for variety of incidents, is no less famous than that of his Name.

For so he called himself.

fake Alexander the Great, since the latter has not signalized himself more by his Noble Exploits than the former has done by his well-managed Impostures. However, out of Compliance with you, I undertake it, and will endeavour to acquit my self of the performance as well as I can, provided that you carry a stock of good Nature about you to supply my Defects, and pardon my Infirmities. At the same time, I am not without my apprehensions, that the World will be apt to condemn both of us; me for publishing so many Villanies, and you for putting your Friend upon the Employment. For tho' the Hero of our *Drama* justly deserved to have his Carcass torn in pieces by Beasts of his own Complexion; yet few Persons will be so complaisant to his Memory, as to think he deserves to have his Name recorded in History. But if any one shall Attack me upon this Article, I will e'en defend my

self by the example of *Arrian*, the Disciple of *Epictetus*, who thought it not below his Learning or Quality to

As lately one of the greatest Ornaments of our Na- oblige Posterity with the History of a Famous Robber.

tion has condescended to write the Life of *Et cætera* Young.

Behold then, after so authentick a President, the Life of a remarkable Ravager, not one who made Mountains and Forests the solitary Scene of his Actions, but Towns and Cities, and did not over-run Desarts, but ravaged a whole Empire. To begin

So was Mahomet, and so were most of the new Religion-Founders; for without that they could never have succeeded with their best Clients the Women.

with his Description: He was of a good Shape and Mien, a lively Eye, his Complexion black, a clear Voice, a sweet and affable Tone, with a little thin Beard, and some false Hair so dexterously mixt with his own, that one could not easily distinguish them. Besides this, he

was furnished with several good Qualities, quick Apprehension, a retentive Memory, a great Vivacity of Thought, but these Talents he wholly Consecrated to Mischief, and made no other use of them than to raise him above all those Impostors of cursed Memory, that ever visited the World. He never shew'd a grain of Modesty but once, and that was in a Letter to his Son-in-law *Rufinus*, wherein he compar'd himself with a great deal of Self denial to *Pythagoras*. But, with *Pythagoras's* leave be it spoken, if *Pythagoras* had lived in his Time, he had been but a Pigmy to our Gyant: Not that I would in the least compare that Philosopher to such a profligate Rascal; but only observe, That all that's falsely said of *Pythagoras* is not to be named the same Year with what is really true of our *Alexander*. In short, before you proceed any farther, imagine to your self an abridgment of all sorts of Cheats, Lyes, Perjuries, and Impositions, accompanied with a sprightly bold designing Spirit, and carried on by a Person who had the knack of making People believe whatever he pleas'd; but so reserved and cautious, that nobody ever parted from him but with this Opinion, That he was certainly one of the Honestest, Godliest Men in the World.

Being, as we have describ'd him before, very handsome in his Youth, but miserably Poor, he was oblig'd, in his own defence, to prostitute him-

himself to all sorts of Customers, and particularly to a certain *Charlatan* or *Quack* that set up for a Conjuror, sold *Charmes* and *Poisons*, cut *Corns* at the full of the Moon, *Calculated Nativities*, helped People to stoln *Silver Spoons*, and cou'd do a thousand things of the like nature and importance. I must (*en passant*) do the Fellow so much Justice as to own he was somewhat skill'd in *Physick*; and that he knew several Receipts, some good and some bad; which is no wonder, for he was one of *Apollonius Tyanicus*'s Countrymen, and was no Stranger to his Person. You see what a blessed Country our *Quack* had his Education in, and hence may conjecture that he was no little *Scoundrel*, but a *Rascal* of good Figure and Address. He observing the quick lively Spirit of our young *Alexander*, took a great deal of Pleasure in Instructing him, being as much taken with the Boy's Beauty, as the Boy was with his Master's dextrous way of living, who, in a short time, of a Disciple made him his Companion. By that time *Alexander* was grown up to Man's Estate, his Tutor and his Face were gone the way of all Tutors and Faces; in plain *English* his Tutor was dead, and his Beauty was gone, so his Necessities drove him to find out some new extraordinary Project, whereby he might be in a capacity to keep Body and Soul together.

As Notorious an
Impossor as our
Alexander.

In his Travels he pick'd up a Penny Chronicle-Writer of *Byzantium*, one of them, whom in Modern Language we call a Son of *Grub-street*, one that was a stedfast hardened impenitent Rogue.

He took one Coc-
conas for his
Companion.

These two, after some Oath of Secrelie on both sides, beat the Hoof together, and as they marched, Cheated a World of poor ignorant silly People, that had the Misfortune to fall into their Clutches. At last they dropt into the Acquaintance of an old Gentlewoman who had two commendable Qualities; for first she had store of Old Gold by her; and secondly, was of a Temper easie to be imposed upon. She was born at *Pella*, formerly the Capital City of *Macedonia*, now in a manner a Desert, and only Inhabited by a few sorry Mechanics; our two Sparks followed her from *Bithynia* to this place, eating and drinking all the while at her Expence; for why should the Godly Starve, and the Rich only Riot? Being arrived here, and observing a sort of large Serpents, so exceeding tame that they would kiss the Women,

may, suck their Breasts, and play with the Children without doing them any Mischief (from whence undoubtedly came the Story of *Olympia*) they bought one, the biggest and the most beautiful they could find, and with no other Stock than this same Animal, and their own assurance, managed all the strange adventures I am going to relate. These two blessed Rake-hells (I beg their Pardon, I should call them

Who pretended to have been obliged (the Ladies know my meaning) by a Serpent.

Philosophers) observing that Hope and Fear are the two Poles upon which Mankind turns; and indeed the whole Foundation of Curiosity and Superstition, were resolved to make both these Passions further their Ambitious Designs, and so set up an Oracle, which met with a success infinitely above their expectation. It was some time before they could pitch upon a place where to begin the Farce. *Cocconas* looked upon the City of *Chalcedon* to be the properest place for their design, because of the mighty confluence there of the several Nations that lay around it: But *Alexander* prefer'd his own Country, and alledged for his reason, the great Stupidity and Superstition of the People, (both which you know are very necessary towards the establishment of a new Religion) who no sooner hear of a new upstart Mountebank, but they meet him with beating of Drums, with Flutes and Cymbals; and in short, Worship him as heartily as if they had seen him drop out of the Clouds.

This advice being, after some debate resolved upon, they privately hid a Copper-Plate in the old Temple of *Apollo* at *Chalcedon*, whereon was written, *That Esculapius with his Father Apollo, wou'd shortly come and fix his Habitation*

Your was the Cities Name where our Impostor was born.

at *Abonoteichos*. After this, they so contrived matters, that the Plate was found bearing this wonderful Inscription, the news whereof immediately spread it self through all *Pontus*, *Bithynia*, and particularly alarm'd the Town above-named; so that the Godly Inhabitants, in one of their publick Meetings, decreed a Temple to these Gods, and began to lay the Foundation of it. All this while *Cocconas* turned the Penny by retailing false and ambiguous Oracles at *Cocconas dies*. *Chalcedon*, but unhappily died in one of his Drunken Debauches; and soon after *Alexander* succeeds him

him in his Function, with his Hair spread at full length about his Shoulders, a Vest of Purple, bordered with White, over all this a Surplice, and in these Formalities pretended to Preach the Will of Heaven to the People. The wretched *Paphlagonians*, altho' they very well knew both his Father and Mother, who were kept by the Parish; yet for all that were such incredible Sots as to believe a Lying Oracle, published by our Impostor, in which he called himself the Son of *Podalirius*, who must certainly have been put to very hard shifts for want of a Bedsfellow, if he were forced to come from *Trica* as far as *Paphlagonia*, to lie with this Juggler's Mother.

He sham'd another Oracle upon the People, under the name of one of the *Sybil's*, wherein he talked of a *Deliverer* or *Rescuer*, who was speedily to appear; but all this was disguised in such a mystical Jargon, that tho' nothing could be made of it, yet the People fancied some deep Mystery lay at the bottom.

Alexander therefore coming into his own Country, after these Predictions, you may swear he was followed and respected, and entertained like any God. He feigned himself sometimes to be possessed with a Divine Fury, and by the means of the Root of a certain Herb, commonly called *Fuller's Herb*, which he chaw'd (as Modern *Sir Davy Dunc*, in the Play, does his Tobacco) he wou'd foam excessively at the Mouth, which these ignorant Blockheads attributed to the force of the God that possessed him. He had not long before dressed up a Dragon's Head made of Linen Clouts, very much resembling a Mans Face, which was taught to open and shut its Mouth, by the means of some Horse-Hairs. Now this was to act in Concert with the Serpent above-mentioned, which was to sustain the principal part in the Comedy. A little before he began the Show, he slyly conveyed himself to the place where the Foundations of the Temple were a laying, and meeting with a pud-

a puddle of Water, he hid a Goose Egg in it, wherein he had inclosed a young Serpent that was but newly hatched. Next Morning he came all naked to the Market-place, saying that he wore a Scarf with a Gold Fringe about his Waist, to cover his Nudities, holding an Axe in his hand, and throwing his Hair about his Shoulder, as the Priests of *Cybele* are used to do. Then mounting upon a high Altar, he began to tell the Mob, how happy the City was in being honoured with the Birth of a God.

At these words, all the People, who had left their Houses to behold so surprising a Spectacle, fell a Praying and Vow-making like stark mad, while our Religious Rascal was bantering them in *Hebrew* or *Phœnician*, which almost scared them out of the little remainder of their Wits. At last he runs to the place where he had hid his Goose Egg, and entring the Water begins a *To Deum* to *Apollo* and *Asculapius*, humbly beseeching the latter to descend and show himself to Men. These words were no sooner pronounced, but he strikes the Water with his Wand, and takes out the mysterious Egg, which had a God inclosed in its Shell; and having it now in his hand, he assures 'em that *Asculapius* was come. Every one was attentive to contemplate this pretty Mystery, when our Impostor breaking the Egg-shell, lo! our comes the little Serpent I told you of before, and turned and wound himself nimbly round his Fingers. 'Tis impossible to describe the admiration and joy of the multitude at this wonderful sight. The Sky was filled with Acclamations, Praises, and Thanksgiving. One fell down on his Marrow-bones, and begs the God to

to restore him his Health ; a second prays to be an Alderman ; a third to bury his Wife with all speed ; and so on, as their several Inclinations led them.

In the mean time, our Holy Prophet runs home as hard as he cou'd drive, holding this new riggling Divinity in his hands, and follow'd by an infinite press of People, of all Ages and Conditions, who were transported out of their Wits, to think that a God was so kind as to come and take up his Quarters among them.

He locked himself up in his Apartment, with his God, meaning the Serpent, *He publicly shows the Serpent, pretending it was Esculapius himself.* had arrived to his just length and proportion ; and one day, when the tag rag and long tail of *Raphlogonia* was got there, and his House cramm'd with People from the Cellar up to the Garret ; he seated himself on his Bed in his Prophetick Habit ; and holding that great Serpent in his Bosom, which he had brought with him out of Macedonia ; he began to show him twining about his Neck, and drawing his long Tail after him. But he purposely hid his Head under his Arm-pits, showing only the Linnen head, which somewhat resembled that of a Man ; so that the Spectators were filled with the greatest surprize imaginable.

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We must here remark, That the Chamber was somewhat dark, and that the Company was principally composed of poor senseless Ideots, who were already Cheated out of their little sense and reason by the gibberish and illusions of this Holy Counterfeit. To this we may add, that they did not stay long enough to discover the Cheat, but that as they entered at one door, so they went out at another immediately, to make way for the mighty throng of People that came in perpetually.

This Spectacle continued for some days without intermission; and afterwards was renewed as often as any Person of Quality arrived in those Parts.

We are not therefore to wonder, if the stupid ignorant Mob swallowed his Miracles with so much alacrity; since even those of better understandings could not tell what to think, when they saw and touched a Dragon, who was the other day hatched before their Eyes, grown on a suddain to such a prodigious Greatness; and what was the greatest Riddle of all, having the Face of a Man.

An

An *Epicurus*, or a *Democritus*, or, in short, any of the ancient Philosophers, who were well versed in nature, would without any difficulty have pronounced it to be a juggle at first sight, altho they could not discover the mystery of the operation: But as all people have not the luck to be Philosophers, the Inhabitants of *Bythinia*, *Galatia*, and *Thrace* went in shoals to satisfy their eye-sight with those Miracles, of which Fame had already made such prodigious relations. His Picture was sold every where, with Statues of Silver and Copper, after the life. Nay, an Oracle was published, which foretold his name, and stiled him, Glycon, the third of the race of Jupiter, who brought light to men. So then our impostor finding a favourable opportunity for his purpose, sets up for an Oracle-monger, and sells his Predictions for Money; following the example of *Amphilochus*, who after the death of his father *Amphiaraus*, being ejected out of *Thebes*, withdrew into *Asia*, where he told the Barbarians their fortune for two-pence apiece. To bring this about, he informs the people that the God was inclined to answer all manner of questions himself at such an appointed time; and that they should write down whatever they demanded a resolution for, in a Letter sealed up. Then shutting himself in the Sanctuary of the Temple, which by this time was finished, he caused all those persons who had given in their Letters to be called in order one after another, and there to have 'em restored to them again sealed up as they were at first, with the Gods answer. It would have been an easie matter for a man of a tolerable capacity to have found out the Cheat, but these Sots did not perceive that he unsealed the Letters in private, and after he had inclosed what answer seem'd fittest for him, returned them back to their respective owners, sealed exactly as at first. For there are an hundred ways of breaking open a Letter, without doing any injury to the Impression; and I shall here set down one or two of them, that so for the future meer slight of hand may not pass for a Miracle. In the first place, one may with a hot Needle disjoin the Wax that fastens the Thread to the Letter, and not do the least damage to the Seal, so that after he has read as much as he pleases, he may rejoyne it as it was before. There

Having established his Reputation amongst the People he sets up an Oracle.

By himself to be sure.

No Penny, no Oracle.

Cheap enough of all conscience.

That was the old way. Hence the Phrase *linum incidere*, i. e. break open a Letter.

Thier is likewise another invention, which is as follows : The party takes Lime and Glue ; or else a Mustic composed of Pitch, Wax, and Bitumen, mingled with the powder of a very transparent Stone. Of these ingredients he makes a Ball, upon which, when it is as yet soft and tender, he takes the impression of the Seal, after he has gently rubb'd it with Oyl or Hogs-grease : for it hardens in a moment, and will serve to seal the Letter again full as well as the very Seal. There are several other Secrets of the like nature, my dear friend, which it is not necessary for me to acquaint you with, since you have made mention of them in your Treatise of the *Artifice of the Magicians*, which is an excellent Book, and very serviceable to undeceive those ignorant people, who are so apt to be abused by their own credulity. But to re-assume our story.

His caution in
selling of For-
tunes.

Having thus set up for himself, he used the greatest address and dexterity he was master of, for fear of being found out in his Roguery ; and to that end always entrenched himself behind obscure and ambiguous answers, according to the custom of all Oracle-mongers. One while he encouraged, and at another time dissuaded people from such and such enterprizes, as he saw most convenient ; Sometimes he prescribed certain Remedies, or a course of Physick to the sick ; for to give him his due, he knew several pretty Secrets in that Science. As for what related to successions and inheritances, he ever took care to delay his answers to such questions, referring them to a better opportunity, or till his Prophet was in humour ; for this impudent Visionary always personated the God, and spoke in his name. His price was about 12 pence for every Oracle, which amounted to a considerable sum, for he retailed threescore or fourscore thousand of them in a year. Nor are we to wonder at it, for the people were so befotted with these fooleries, (as 'tis the nature of the two legg'd herd to run after novelties, and be inquisitive of future things) that the same person made sometimes a dozen or fifteen demands, at twelve pence apiece for each of them ; for it was not allowed them to put up two in the same Billet. But all the Money he received did not go immediately to his own Coffers, for he maintained abundance of Officers under him, some of whom put the Oracles into Verse, others sub-

scribed.

scribed them; or sealed them, or interpreted them, or kept them; and every one had a Salary proportionable to his place and merits.

Besides this, he had his Spys and Emisseries in the remotest Countries, who spread the reputation of his Oracle in all places, assuring the people that it foretold things to come, discovered hidden treasures, helped the right owners to what they had lost, healed the sick, and in fine did ten times more than can be expected. Multitudes flocked to him from all parts with sacrifices and presents, as well for the God, as for the Prophet; for in one of his Oracles he commanded them to be kind to his Minister, as having little need of their Offerings himself. No sooner had several men of Worth and Learning discovered the deceit, and particularly some Philosophers of *Epicurus's* sect, but he endeavored all he could to affright 'em, crying aloud that all the Country was over-run with Christians and impious Persons, who raised Calumnies against him, and commanded the People to stone them, if they had a mind to ingratiate themselves with the God. Being once demanded, how it fared with *Epicurus* in the other world, he replied, that he was duckt over Head and Ears in a nasty Puddle; and loaded with Chains of Lead. The reason is very plain, he owed him a spight for laying open all these Villanies and Impositions, that walk up and down the world, under the pretence of Religion: But *Plato*, *Chrysippus* and *Pythagoras* were his good Friends. He had a particular aversion

No Cheat to be carried on without assistance.

This has been the artifice of corrupt Priest-hood in all Ages and Countries, to set the Mob upon the Discoverers of their wicked designs, and so to have them knocked in the head for Gods sake.

to the City of *Amastria* upon the account of some of *Lepidus's* acquaintance there, as also of several *Epicurean* Philosophers, and would never return an answer from his Oracle to any of its Inhabitants. But happening once to return one to the Proconsul's brother there, he made but a mock of him, ordering him to take a Hogs foot and some Mallows, for a pain in his stomach, and that in such ridiculous terms that no body could tell what he meant. Whether it were because he had none of his Officers at that instance near him to compose the Oracle, or because he could not tell what answer to make.

In the mean time he frequently showed the Serpent to those that had a mind to see him, but he still kept the head of it in his own bosom, and would not permit them to touch any part of it but his body and his tail. Having a design one day

to improve his imposture, he told them that *Esculapius* would answer visibly, and this he called *Answers from the Gods own mouth*. He effected this by the help of a Cranes sinews, dexterously placed in the Dragons head which was made of Linnen, and served instead of Organs, to carry the voice of a man, who stood in the next room; but this Trick was not to be shewn every day, and was principally calculated for Persons of Condition. The answer he made to *Severian*, concerning the enterprize of *Armenia*, was of this number: in which he promised him Victory, but after his Defeat, he substituted another in the room of it, which seemed to dissuade him from this attempt. The truth on't is, he had impudence enough to correct his Oracles, when they did not succeed, and if it so fell out that he promised health to a sick party who afterwards happened to dye, he published another quite contrary to the former.

Rogues will always colloque with one another.

However to gain the good graces of the Brotherhood, as *Mallus*, *Claros* and *Didyma*, where their Oracles told full as many lies as his own, he frequently commanded his Querists to consult them, but especially when he was hard put to it, and had a mind to evade a pinching Question. Thus I have told you what passed in those places that were near his habitation, but when once his Reputation was spread in *Italy* and *Rome*, every one almost either visited or sent to him, and particularly men of the first Rank, and such as were interested in their Prince's favour. The chief of these was *Rutilianus*, who had signalized himself on several occasions, and was a very honest Gentleman, but so excessively superstitious that he could not forbear kneeling before all the stones he met on the road, upon which any effusion had been made, or a Garland placed. He was once in a mind to quit the Army, which he commanded at that time, to make our Impostor a visit at his own house, but upon second considerations, dispatched Messengers upon Messengers thither. As the persons he sent were only Varlets, it was no difficult matter to deceive them, and these Blockheads still adding new lies to those which their Fellows told before them, in order to make their relations the more agreeable, it increased his passion, and gave new vigor to his curiosity.

This was frequently practised by the devourer sort of Pagans, as we may see at the beginning of *Mitucius Felix*.

In the mean time being acquainted with most of the considerable Persons of *Rome*, he recounted to them all that had been reported to him, and as the custom of the world is, mingled something of his own invention, to make the Legend more entertaining. So that he fill'd the whole Town with these Impositions, and engaged abundance of his friends to consult the Oracle to know their fortune. They were very kindly received by our Prophet, who made them several Presents, that at their return they might speak well of him, and publish his praise. He made use of another trick, and that was this; if after he had perused their questions, he found some of them too bold, he kept the Billet without returning any answer to it, to have it as a pledge for the fidelity of the person that sent it; who by this means was constrained to keep fair with this Rascal, instead of complaining of him.

Rutilianus helps to carry on the cheat.

And here I have a fit opportunity to recount to you some of the Answers he made to *Rutilianus*. This Nobleman having demanded of him, What sort of Master he should place over his Son? he answered, in ambiguous terms, as your Rascally Oracles have always used to do, *Pythagoras and Homer*. But the Child dying some time after this, and our Fortune-teller being in some pain how to defend his Oracle, *Rutilianus* help'd to put the Cheat upon himself, and gave out that he had foretold the death of his Son, in signing him for his Masters those that were out of the World. At another time the same Nobleman having asked him, according to the doctrine of *Pythagoras*, what he had been before he was what he is now, and lastly, what would become of him hereafter? He told him that he had been *Achilles*, then *Menander*, and that he would become a ray of the Sun after he had lived a hundred and fourscore years. But for all that he died of Melancholy at the Age of seventy, contrary to the direct promise of the Oracle, altho' it seem'd to be one of the most authentic it ever utter'd. *Rutilianus* entertaining thoughts of a second Marriage, our Prophet offered him his Daughter, whom he pretended to have begotten of the Moon who fell in Love with him, as she did in the days of *Tyre* with *Endimion*, and commanded him

A true Church-trick for they generally reserve a loop-hole for themselves so creep out of.

to

to marry her. All which he did without any farther consideration, after he had offered some Hecatombs to his Mother in Law, and thought himself already made free of Heaven.

*A Quack this
last year in
Barkshire sold
Pills to the
Country People
to preserve them
from Earth-
quakes.*

After this mighty success, our Impostor fell upon higher designs, and dispatched Messengers into all Countries with his Oracles, admonishing some Cities to preserve themselves from Plagues, some from Fire, and others from Earthquakes; with a promise to send them effectual Remedies, to prevent all these dismal accidents. He likewise published an Oracle, as if it had immediately proceeded from the God's own mouth, to serve as a preservative against a Contagion which then raged with extreme violence. One might have seen it written on the doors of most Houses, being supposed to be a Sovereign remedy against this calamitous distemper; but by misfortune these Houses were first visited with it, because out of a vain confidence or security they neglected their own preservation.

*He institutes a
religious proces-
sion.*

He had several Setters at Rome, who acquainted him with the humour and inclination of all the great men there; and sent him before-hand all the Questions they intended to ask him when they arrived thither, that he might have leisure enough to prepare his Answers. He also established a sort of Society or Fraternity, where they carried lighted Torches in their hands, with diverse Ceremonies, that lasted three days. On the first, Proclamation was made as they do at Athens, *If there be here any Epicurean, or Christian, or impious person, who comes on purpose to ridicule our mysteries, let him immediately withdraw: but let the faithful be initiated; and not lose the opportunity.* Then he marched at the head of them, crying aloud, *Christians be gone;* and all the multitude answered, *Away Epicureans.* After this they celebrated Latona's lying in, with the birth of Apollo and the marriage of Coronis; all which was followed with the arrival of Asculapius. On the second day was solemnized the nativity of Glycon; and on the third the Marriage of Podalirius and the Mother of our Prophet, and then the Torches were all lighted, from whence the whole Ceremony borrowed its name. There were

were likewise represented the Amours of our Prophet and the Moon, of whom the Wife of *Rutilianus* was born, and he compos'd himself to sleep in the midst of the Ceremony like another *Endimion*. At the same time a handfom Lady descended down from a Machine who represented the Moon, She was Wife to the Deputies Steward, and had the Impudence in her Husband's presence to kiss and embrace our holy Impostor, and perhaps the affair had been carried farther, if it had not been for the Company; for 'tis well known that they had no aversion one to the other.

At another time he made his appearance in his Pontifical Habits, keeping at first great silence, and then cried out all on the sudden *Io Glycon*, to which a large Chorus of Musicians answered *Io Alexander*, followed by the Heralds of the Country, who were huge lusty Clod pates, in Fantastic Garbs. All this while as the procession pass'd along with Flambeaux, and many misterious antick gestures, he took care ever and anon to discover his golden thigh, which he did to Counterfeit *Pythagoras*, and effected it, as I imagine, by the means of a gilt skin, that made a glittering, reflexion by the light of the Torches. This business rais'd a mighty debate between two Philosophers, *viz.* whether he had not the Soul of *Pythagoras* as well as his Thigh, but it was referred to the decision of his Oracle, which answer'd that the Soul of *Pythagoras* arose and died from time to time, whereas that of our Prophet, was immortal, and of Divine extraction.

Altho he forbid the love of Boys as damnable and detestable yet he commanded the Cities of *Pontus* and *Paphlagonia* to send him such to consult his Oracle, and sing the Praises of his God. In pursuance of this Order they sent him every third year Boys born of good Parentage, and the handsomest they could find, whom this Pious Letcher made use of in his secret Pleasures. He had established a pleasant custom, which was, that none should presume to kiss him if they were above eighteen years old: by which politic he only kiss'd those that were young, whom for this reason he was us'd to call his *kissing Children*. As for other People he gave them his hand to kiss.

'Tis no new thing for the Priesthood to preach against the things they recommend by their practice.

Behold,

*The true reason
why the women
were always so
fond of the Ec-
clesiastics.*

Behold after what a prodigious manner he abused these poor believing wretches, who took it for a great favour to see him care for their Wives and Children: Nay some of the women openly boasted that they were with Child by him, and forced their Husbands to witness as much. But setting aside such stories, I will here relate to you a Dialogue between the God and a Priest of *Tao*, whose inclinations you'll be able to guess at by his answers, as I my self did, who read the whole passage at his House.

*A pleasant Dia-
logue between a
Priest and the
Oracle.*

Question. Tell me, John Case, who art thou?

Answer. I am the new Dr. Saffold.

Q. Art thou Dr. Saffold himself, or some body else that resembles him?

Ans. It is not permitted to reveal these Mysteries.

Q. How many years wilt thou continue here to give Oracles near Ludgate?

A. More than a dozen.

Q. Where dost thou intend to go after that?

A. To *White-Fryers*, then to *Moor-fields*, to honour the Out-skirts of the Town with my presence.

Q. Are the Oracles of *Gadbury*, Dr. *Partridge*, and Poor *Robin* true Oracles?

A. Don't desire to know forbidden things.

Q. What shall I drink when I go from hence?

A. First Flip, then Cherry-brandy, next Sherry and Sugar, next Brandy and Gun-powder, and lastly a Dose of Liquid Brimstone to settle your Stomack for Eternity to prevent any farther curdling of Conscience, or Poultry puker of Grace.

This

This was the sum and substance of the fine Conversation between them. But our Quack knowing this Priest to be a Friend of *Zepherus*, he must needs trump up an Oracle to prevent all future correspondences between them, in which he pretended that *Zepherus* threatened to put him to a cruel death. For he feared *Epicurus* and his Followers, as being sworn Enemies to his impostures, so that he employed all his efforts to get a poor *Epicurean* trussed up, who had the bardiness to reproach him, with causing several innocent persons to be put to death by the means of his lying Oracle, which happened after this manner:

Who put no
great Faith in
his Miracles.

He had advised a certain man of that Country, to accuse his Slaves before the Governor of that Province, as accessory to the death of his Son, who sailing up the Nile, was persuaded to go as far as the Indies, without saying a word of the matter to his People, whom he left behind him at *Alexandria*. These Fellows hearing no news of their young Master, gave him for dead, and so returned home to his Father, who accused them, as I told you, before the Proconsul of *Galatia*, at the instigation of this Oracle, and had them hanged for it. Some time after the execution was over, and the poor Wretches dispatched into another world, comes home the dead Son who justified their Innocence, but now there was no remedy for what was past. Our Prophet not being able to endure the many just reproaches that were made him upon this score, commanded those that were about him to stone the Accuser, unless they were minded to be his Accomplices; and the Mob had most assuredly done as they were bidden, if one *Dionysius* who happened to be upon the spot had not immediately refused him. As for my self, I should not have complained much, had the business taken effect; for why the Devil should a man of sense hazard his life to undeceive a parcel of Sots that don't deserve it.

Here is a Specimen of Religion's Mercy.

He did another thing, which occasioned no less clamor. It was his fortune to light upon a book that contained the principal doctrines of *Epicurus*, in which my mind one of the noblest remainders of antiquity, and purges our Souls of infirmities much better than all the Ceremonies of Purification;

In a fit of Zeal he sentences an Epicurean book to the Flames.

D

for

for it not only heals and cures us of our extravagant passions, but delivers us from all superstition, and those vain fancies that fright us out of our senses. Having found this book, as I have already told you he publicly burnt it, after he had forged an Oracle to countenance the business, and threw the ashes into the Sea. But now prepare to hear the most impudent untruth that ever was uttered.

*As true swimming
Courts Divine
will never be in
the wrong.*

As he had got his admission into the Court, by the means and interest of his Son-in-law *Rutilianus*, he sent an Oracle to the Emperor *Marcus Aurelius*, who was at that time making War in *Germany*, wherein he commanded him to throw two Lions into the *Danube* with several Ceremonies, giving him an assurance of an immediate Peace, which should be preceded by a remarkable Victory. These Lions crossing the River were killed by the Enemy, and soon after the *Barbarians* defeated the *Romans*, who had like to have lost *Aquileia*, after the total overthrow of Twenty Thousand of their men. But this hardened Villain to save his Bacon made use of *Apollo's* Artifice to *Cæsar*, pretending that he had rightly foretold a great Victory, but never declared the name of the Conqueror.

*Our Prophet has
more Strings to
his Bow than
one.*

Now vast Multitudes of People flocking to him from all parts, and the smallness of the City, where he lived, not being able to contain such prodigious numbers, much less to feed them, he invented Night Oracles, for so the Beast named them, which he managed as follows. After he had received his Questions he went to sleep, and gave out that he was informed in a Dream of the Answer he was to make, which was always either doubtful or obscure especially when the Letter was too accurately sealed to be opened without danger. In such cases he generally returned the first Answer that came into his Head, either because such a conduct looked most like that of other Oracles, or because it brought him in the greatest gift to his Mill: for he had several Interpreters about him to explain these Night Oracles, each of whom presents him yearly with a Talent by way of recompence, instead of receiving any appointment from him.

Sometimes

Sometimes when he had no body to consult him, he forged new Oracles to amuse the Sots, as for instance this, which says, *Search the Prentice in whom thou confidest most, for to revenge the injuries thou hast done him, he carries a Pen Knife in his Pocket, and lest thou shouldst discover it, thy Wife Kate and He design to swear thee into a Plot, by the same token that thy maid Joan is an accomplice.* Who is the Democritus that would not have been imposed upon, after so many circumstances; but he was immediately laughed out of the trick after it was once discovered. If a Question was put to him in a strange Language, he deferred the Answer to gain time to return it in the same Tongue; and when he had no body to help him off at such a pinch, he was obliged to make a virtue of necessity, and answer it in his own, as once he did when he said, *Stranger return into thy own Country, for he that has sent thee hither was murdered yesterday by John a Stiles, and the Assassinate are all in the Gazette.*

How strangely he abuses the credulity of the People.

I must now beg leave to recount some of the Oracles, which he was pleased to communicate to my self. One day when I had enquired of the God (and 'twas a question not easy to be resolved) whether his Prophet was in a milk dyet or no, he answered me in his hum drum way, *Tom Thumb's Son to Williams Thumb, and Nephew to Adoniram Thumb the Grocer has sold himself to a Tobacco Plantation.* At another time having writ the same demand in several Pillets, all which were brought to him from different places, that he might mistrust nothing, he ordered me in his Answer to visit the Bagnio in *Covent-garden*, and forbear Claret, having been deceived by the Fellow that brought him the Billet; who told him that I asked a Remedy against pissing of Needles. Nevertheless my Question was, who stood Godfather to the Monument. In another, without taking the least notice of the Monument or *Fish-street hill*, he very gravely forbade me to call at *Putney*, being in like manner bantered by the Footman who presented him the Billet, and assured him that I only enquired which was the best way for me to return to back to *Moreclack*.

Lucian puts the Doctor upon the Oracle.

I bethought my self of several other inventions to discover his Roguery, as for instance, to put only one demand in a

There are more ways to the Billet, than one.

Wills, and to pay as if there were several tack'd together, for his custom was to give you just so many Oracles as you paid Shillings, and these had no manner of relation either to themselves, or to the Question. Having therefore manifestly discovered the juggle, I used all my endeavors to disengage *Rutilianus* from any alliance with him, which made the lying Bard conceive a mortal hatred against me, and he was not unmindful to quit scores with me as soon as he saw a fair opportunity. For when *Rutilianus* consulted the Oracle concerning me, he answered, *That I loved young Boys, and forbidden Pleasures*. I remember I went to see him once, having two Souldiers in my company, which the Governour of the Province, who was my very good friend, sent along with me, lest he should do me a mischief. As soon as he heard of my arrival, he dispatched one of his Servants to invite me to his house, and in appearance received me with great civility. Nevertheless I so perfectly hated him for his dam'd Villanies and Cheats, that when he gave me his hand to kiss, I could not forbear biting it, and that with so good a Stomach, that 'tis strange he did not set his *Myrmidons* upon me to teach me better manners, by knocking out my brains; and so much the rather, because I called him by his name, without giving him the title of Doctor to utter it in.

*It is not always
convenient for a
man to discover
his designs.*

To say the truth, this old Rascal bore the affront with wonderful patience; he told me he had a mind to show me that his God could calm the most outrageous Spirits. After this, making signs for the company to withdraw, he complained of me for endeavouring to make a breach between him and *Rutilianus*; telling me I took very wrong measures to quarrel with the man who was in a capacity to make my Fortune when he pleased. I seemed to listen very attentively to his discourse, to save my self from the danger that threatned me, and departed in very good terms from him, which still more and more astonished the standers by.

*Oh the great
Bowels of your
Pretenders to
Santship!*

Resolving at last to embark, he sent me several presents, furnished me with a Felucca and men to row her; which made me believe that he design'd to gain me over to his party by this extraordinary favour. When we were got far enough from any shore, I perceived the Pilot weeping, and disputing very earnestly with the Sea-men. This alarm'd me

me with distrust of my safety, and so much the more, because I had but one of my Servants with me, having sent back the rest to *Amastri*, with my Father. I enquired what was the occasion of the dispute? and he told me, That being now old, and having always behaved himself like an honest man, he was not willing in the last scene of his life to fall all with a wicked action, nor expose his Wife and Children to divine vengeance. When I still press him to tell me what was the matter, he confess that he had orders to throw me over board. Upon this information I desired him to set me ashore at the next Port; where meeting with some Ambassadors, who were going to carry their yearly Tribute to the Emperour, I told them my adventure, which made that impression upon them, that they gave me room in their Vessel, and landed me safe at *Amastri*.

After the Villain had served me this Dog trick, I declared open War against him, and was upon the point of summoning him before his betters, as several other Gentlemen were ready to do; but the Governour of the Province earnestly desired me to let the business fall; adding, that tho' I should discover never so many of his impostures, yet so long as the Rascal had *Rutilianus's* ear, it would signify just nothing; for whilst he was in credit with a person of his quality, the Law would never reach him. This advice prevailed with us to desist. But to pursue my History. What an intolerable insolence was it in our Quack, to petition the Emperour to change the name of the City, and call it *Isonopolis*? Or who can ever forgive a Scoundrel of his infamous Character, for ordering Medals to be stamp'd, bearing the figure of a Serpent on one side, and his own on the reverse, with the arms of *Esculapius*, and the Ax of *Perseus*, from whom he pretends himself to be descended on the Mothers side?

Lucian resolves to be even with him, but is dissuaded.

These Medals are to be seen in Dr. Spon's xxi. Dissertation.

In fine, (for I am abominably weary with raking this Dung-hill so long) he foretold that he should dye by a Thunder-clap, like *Esculapius*, after the term of a hundred, and fifty years; but for all his Predictions, he perished miserably before he had fully compleated seventy of them, of a nasty purulent Ulcer in his Leg, which seized upon all his lower parts, and filled him with innumerable vermin. At this time it was first known that our sham Prophet was bald, when the Chyrurgeons

The miserable end of this Juggler.

Chyrurgeons applied Plaisters to his Head, to assuage the pain. Behold the Catastrophe of this Emperie, which was but a just punishment for his other crimes. He wants nothing now but an Epitaph, and a Successor worthy of him; but I my self dare pretend to Prophecy so far, as to affirm that he must be content to go without both, and that for the same reason: for as no Epitaph can possibly be made bad enough to be worthy of him, so no Villain now living can plead merit, that is, Villany enough to entitle him to his Mantle. Nature as well demands time to breathe, after she has form'd an accomplish'd thorough pac'd Rogue, as after she has made a perfect Hero. Perhaps some dozen ages hence, and in a distant Climate, a person may arise with all his qualifications and endowments; but till then we must not expect such a Phoenix: she has exhausted all her force in our *Alexander*, and must be allowed sufficient time to recruit herself, before she can afford to produce another.



The Conclusion

Thus, my dear *Cassius*, I have given you the abridgment of this Impostors Life; which I undertook partly to gratifie your Curiosity, and partly to disabuse some well meaning persons, who have been imposed upon by him in his life time. Tho it was a nauseous employment, yet I was not able to refuse it either to your friendship, or the profound esteem which I have of your probity; not to mention the greatness of your merits, and your love for truth, which are topics too brilliant, to be handed in so inconsiderable and short-liv'd a Paper as this.

To

To the Unknown Translator, by a young Married Woman.

Most unseen Sir, who ere you are,
You've drawn a canting Quack so fair.
So painted the Religious Creature,
Shown every Lineament and Feature
That as I am a breeding Woman,
You've set me longing for some Salmon.
Should I miscarry, troth it may be,
The utter Ruine of my Baby.
At least some Fishes signature,
Upon his Face, or Back for sure.
Which to prevent I went to hear him,
But could not for the Crowd come near him.
Some bid Money for the whole,
I for the Tail-piece, or the Fole:
But Middle-piece upon examen,
Was found worth all the rest o'th Salmon.
A Fish-wife for him a great Stickler,
(Tis thought by some the Quack did tickle her)
Told me, she was with him beyond Sea,
Yet never did so fine a man see.
I ask'd her where. She said New-England,
And further than the English Kings Land.
Our Neighbors told me, that this Quack,
Came home with Mermaid on his Back.
And ift be true, all that we hear,
She spawn'd at Gravesend her Cavere;
Till Charge and Clamor gan to tire him;
He parted with's beloved Syren.
Tis Task too tedious to pursue,
His Story longer——so adieu.

*This baby Sister,
was delivered
of a Child at
Gravesend.*

F I N I S.